BENGALURU, SATURDAY, JANUARY 31, 2026 www.Bangaloremirror.com 16 Pages PRICE ₹4

Bangalore Mirror ON SATURDAY

TEMP Max 28 | Min 14 | Humidity 26% Partly sunny Sensex 82,269 | Nifty 25,320 | Gold 1,54,158 | Silver 3,15,916 | Dollar 91.86 | Euro 109.08 | GBP 125.98

KNOW THE DISEASE

Public health efforts have brought K'taka's leprosy prevalence rate to 0.26, but delayed diagnosis, stigma, lack of awareness remain dangers

PAGE 2

HOLY CIRCULARITY

Sacred offerings gain second life as temples compost flowers, leaves, creating fertiliser through community initiatives

PAGE 4

Overall number of missing children cases in Bengaluru are dipping, but alarming spike in untraced cases — nearly fivefold increase as compared to 2024 — raise concerns as police explain lack of specific information proves hurdle to rescue efforts

LOST AND NEVER FOUND

If child is missing for over 3 months, case gets transferred to anti-human trafficking wing

| Sanjana CS
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TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

"Children found at railway stations or bus stops are often handed over to shelter homes, from where some run away again, further complicating efforts. Many children do not possess mobile phones, making it difficult to understand their background or state of mind
—Police official

Bengaluru recorded the highest number of untraced missing children cases in 2025. Police data up to November 15 shows that out of 3,189 children reported missing, only 2,317 were traced in the state. Of the 867 untraced cases in Karnataka, 338 children are from Bengaluru, which means 34% of the city's reported cases remained unresolved. The rise in untraced missing children, from just 58 in 2024 to significantly higher numbers now, has raised serious concerns over child safety, prompting the Karnataka Police to issue a circular to tighten investigation and monitoring mechanisms.

According to official data, Bengaluru city reported 990 missing children cases in 2025, including 274 boys and 716 girls. Of these, 652 children were traced. Of the 338 untraced, 72 were boys and 266 girls. In comparison, 1,163 cases were reported in 2024, of which 1,105 were traced and 58 remained untraced. In 2023, the city recorded 1,115 missing children cases, with 1,085 traced and 30 untraced. While the overall number of missing children cases in Bengaluru has shown a decline, the number of untraced cases has risen sharply, increasing nearly fivefold compared to 2024, raising serious concerns over tracking and investigation efforts.

Recently, the Karnataka Police issued a circular to strengthen investigation, monitoring and coordination

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6 »

When tigers get cattle treatment

7 posts remain vacant and forest dept is having to use vets trained to treat domestic animals to help wildlife in need

| Sridhar.Vivan
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TWEETS @sridharVMIRROR

When humans fall ill, there is a specialist for every organ and ailment. In Karnataka's forests, however, wildlife in distress often has to make do with veterinarians trained to treat cattle, sheep and pets. The Forest Department currently depends heavily on doctors from the Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Services Department to handle wildlife emergencies, as a severe shortage of specialist wildlife veterinarians continues to plague the system. Of the 12 wildlife veterinary posts created by the Forest Department, only five are filled, all through deputation, while seven key posts remain vacant.

The impact of this gap is being felt at a time when human–wildlife conflict is rising steadily across the state. Official data shows that between 2019 and 2023, as many as 342 cases of human–wildlife conflict were reported, with an average of 55 to 60 human deaths every year. Wildlife fatalities have also been alarming. Between 2021 and 2025, Karnataka recorded 67 tiger deaths, while more than 201 elephants died between 2022 and 2025. Conservationists point out that delayed or improper medical intervention is often a contributing

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6 »

THINGS TO DO

01 Musical delight

Indian Craft Brewery presents Saturday Night Live ft Vishnupriya Ravi, an electrifying evening of live music featuring the acclaimed vocalist, known for her powerful stage presence and soulful renditions across genres. **Where: Indian Craft Brewery, near Manyata Tech Park; When: January 31, 8 pm**

02 Tune in

Indiranagar SOCIAL, the neighbourhood café-bar known for its culture-led music programming, will host the Bengaluru debut of ENDS & MEANS. Designed as a groove-led, dance-focused experience, the night centres on music that keeps the floor moving and the energy flowing. **Where: Indiranagar SOCIAL; When: January 31, 8 pm**

03 Vocal point

Atta Galatta is bringing a vocal harmony workshop and jamming session, where participants learn the concepts of vocal harmony, chords, and composing, and then create harmonies together and sing them as a choir. **Where: Atta Galatta, Indiranagar; When: January 31, 2 pm**

04 Laughter dose

Jaspreet Singh will be taking the stage to talk about his wildest job yet - being a father, navigating his innate irresponsible nature to the absurdities of modern parenting, in a show about men, fatherhood, love and loss. **Where: Alliance Francaise, Vasanth Nagar; When: February 1, 8 pm**

05 Meaningful conversations

As part of the global Reclaim The Economy Week, Get It Together Bengaluru has organised a small, participatory gathering to reflect on overconsumption, gig work, and community-led change. **Where: Atta Galatta, Indiranagar; When: February 1, 11 am**

Delayed diagnosis, stigma hinder leprosy elimination

Health and Family Welfare Department underscores ongoing efforts to reduce disease prevalence, while officials stress challenges like deep-seated stigma, lack of awareness push patients to ignore early signs

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On the occasion of World Leprosy Day, Karnataka's Health and Family Welfare Department highlighted steady progress in controlling leprosy, with the state recording a prevalence rate of 0.26 under the National Leprosy Elimination Programme (NLEP). The figure places Karnataka in the lower-to-mid prevalence bracket nationally, reflecting sustained public health efforts. However, health officials caution that the disease continues to pose challenges due to delayed diagnosis, stigma and lack of awareness.

To strengthen elimination efforts, the state will carry out an intensified 14 day door-to-door campaign for those who may have missed treatment or are showing early symptoms.

According to recent data from the Department of Health and Family Welfare, under the National Leprosy Elimination Programme (NLEP), Karnataka has recorded a prevalence rate of 0.26 per cent. The figure places the state in the lower-to-mid prevalence bracket nationally, significantly lower than high-burden states like Chhattisgarh (1.80), Jharkhand (1.46), Odisha (1.37), Chandigarh (1.35) and Maharashtra (1.12).

Key challenges

Speaking about the decline in cases in Karnataka, a health official said that different districts show varying trends, some remain endemic while others have low endemicity, and surveillance is ongoing. "We are seeing fewer Leprosy Grade-2 disability cases and fewer child cases, which is a positive sign. But leprosy is painless and not itchy, so people ignore early patches. By the time they seek care, deformities may have started. Early reporting is critical," the official said.

Despite this, officials stressed that undiagnosed cases could still exist due to people ignoring early symptoms or misidentifying them. Delayed diagnosis, deep-seated stigma and a lack of awareness often lead patients to ignore early signs, they say.

"The disease is often missed because it is painless and doesn't itch. People tend to ignore a simple patch, but after a few months or years, it can lead to permanent deformity. We need to convey that any painless patch, especially on the back, thighs, or lower back, lack of ability to feel touch, pressure, pain, heat and cold, muscle weakness, non-healing ulcers, deformities, particularly in hands, feet and face and inability to close eyes and poor vision must be checked immediately," said a senior health official from Health and Family Welfare Department.

Strengthening response

Health workers will be going door-to-door to identify individuals who may have missed treatment or are showing early symptoms. The state will also deploy ASHA workers and leverage the Rashtriya Bal Swasthya Karyakram (RBSK) to reach school-going children and teenagers.

Recent trends have shown a dip in cases over the last two years, with a drop in Grade-2 disabilities (severe deformities) and child-specific cases.

According to MoHFW data, as of March 2025, the proportion of child cases among newly detected leprosy patients has

Officials say undiagnosed cases could still exist due to people ignoring early symptoms or misidentifying them

steadily declined from 9.04 per cent in 2014–15 to 4.68 per cent in 2024–25, reflecting the programme's success in reducing active community transmission. Similarly, the rate of Grade-2 disability has dropped significantly, from 4.68 cases per million population in 2014–15 to 1.88 cases per million in 2024–25, indicating stronger early detection mechanisms and improved identification of previously hidden cases through sustained surveillance and targeted efforts.

Interestingly, the officials pointed out that the prevalence rate in Bengaluru stands at 0.23, presenting a unique challenge. Officials attribute this largely to the city's large migratory population which often includes individuals coming from other higher-prevalence regions.

"Leprosy is fully curable, with over 99 per cent success when patients follow the prescribed treatment plan," noted the health official.

Artificial shortage drives tobacco prices skyward

Ahead of the upcoming Union budget, tobacco products in the city are being sold at inflated prices, hitting consumers' pockets while skirting government taxes. Dealers are reportedly creating an artificial shortage by hoarding cigarettes, gutka and other tobacco items, selling them to retailers at higher rates. Packs priced at Rs 170 MRP, are now selling for Rs 230, while gutka brands have also jumped sharply.

Despite warnings on packs, smokers continue to purchase at higher costs. Authorities from the Weights and Measures Department admit that monitoring has been lax, and complaints from consumers are rare, leaving price manipulation unchecked. Officials have urged strict action, warning that dealers hoarding or overpricing tobacco products will face enforcement measures. Consumers, meanwhile, bear the brunt as retail prices far exceed printed MRPs, with some packs rising by Rs 50–60 above legal rates. **— BMB**

B'luru to get first waste-to-gas plant within a year

Bengaluru's first waste-to-gas plant, converting 300 tonnes of daily municipal waste into 12 tonnes of compressed biogas (CBG), is set to become operational within a year, the Indian Oil-backed GAIL has announced. Tenders for the project are ready, and work will begin soon. The plant, located on 18 acres in Haralukunte, South Bengaluru, will receive daily waste supply from the city's solid waste management company under an agreement with the Greater Bengaluru Authority. Officials said that the project is expected to supply piped natural gas (PNG) to over 2 lakh households in the city, with a target of expanding to 4–5 lakh homes by 2030. Bengaluru currently ranks among the top 10 cities in the country for PNG use, with 1.61 lakh vehicles running on CNG, including 95,000 autos. A mega CNG station near the airport is also being set up to support the growing clean-fuel network, under the state's new gas distribution policy introduced in 2023. **— BMB**

Double-decker flyover to be completed soon

The Flyover at Silk Board Junction, Bengaluru, famously the city's first double-decker, is nearing completion and is expected to be fully open to traffic by the end of February. The Rs 449-crore project aims to ease congestion along key routes from Central Silk Board Junction to BTM Layout, HSR Layout, and Bellandur. While one side of the flyover opened in May 2024, work on a 42-metre steel bridge delayed full access. Workers are now finishing the concrete deck, and most construction is complete. BMRCL officials said final inspections will be carried out by traffic police before the official opening, ensuring the double-decker is fully operational by February end. **— BMB**

High beam: 10k vehicles in dock

Traffic police have launched a special drive against vehicles fitted with unauthorised red-blue high-beam lights to improve road safety. Between January 7 and 12, over 10,000 vehicle owners were booked, with fines amounting to Rs 51 lakh collected under Section 177 of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988. On the first day alone, more than 1,000 drivers were penalised, officials said. Police stated that the excessive glare from these lights causes serious inconvenience to oncoming motorists, two-wheeler riders, pedestrians and even emergency vehicles, increasing the risk of accidents. Notices have also been issued to shops selling and installing unauthorised lights, with warnings of strict action. **— BMB**

ADVERTORIAL

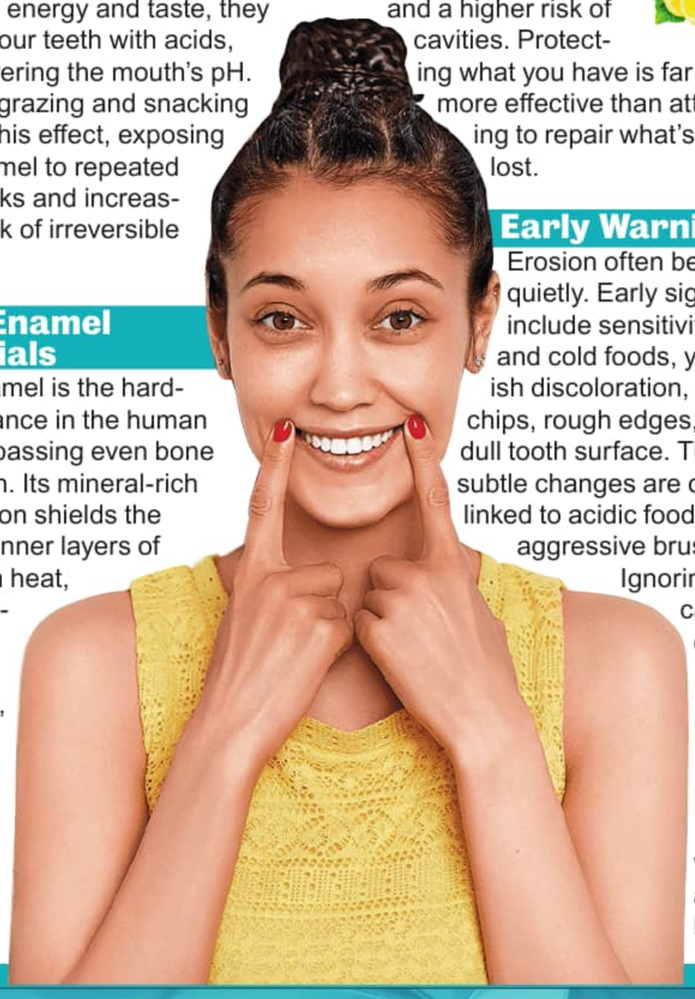
From Coffee to Kombucha

How Today's Everyday Foods Silently Damage Tooth Enamel

In today's fast-paced urban life, our diets have shifted dramatically. Multiple cups of coffee, citrus juices at breakfast, soft drinks between meals, kombucha, pickles, and fermented snacks have become everyday staples. While these foods fuel energy and taste, they also load our teeth with acids, subtly lowering the mouth's pH. Frequent grazing and snacking intensify this effect, exposing tooth enamel to repeated acid attacks and increasing the risk of irreversible erosion.

Tooth Enamel Essentials

Tooth enamel is the hardest substance in the human body, surpassing even bone in strength. Its mineral-rich composition shields the sensitive inner layers of teeth from heat, cold, pressure, and bacterial acids. Yet, tooth enamel has a crucial limitation: it cannot regenerate. Once eroded or thinned, the damage is permanent. Dental experts emphasize prevention because tooth enamel loss leads to sensitivity, structural wear, and a higher risk of cavities. Protecting what you have is far more effective than attempting to repair what's already lost.



Early Warning

Erosion often begins quietly. Early signs include sensitivity to hot and cold foods, yellowish discoloration, minor chips, rough edges, and a dull tooth surface. These subtle changes are often linked to acidic foods or aggressive brushing. Ignoring them can accelerate wear, leaving tooth enamel increasingly vulnerable. Early intervention—through preventive oral care and tooth enamel-strengthening toothpaste—is essential to halt damage before it becomes irreversible.

Diet Impact

Everyday foods can silently undermine tooth enamel. Pickles, lemon water, fermented dishes, tangy condiments, and strong tea temporarily soften tooth enamel, lowering the mouth's pH. When exposure is frequent, the tooth enamel loses minerals and becomes prone to abrasion from chewing or brushing. Over time, this cumulative erosion leads to thinning, sensitivity, yellowing, and heightened decay risk. Awareness of dietary acidity is key to long-term tooth enamel health.

Protective Habits

Small changes can make a big difference. Rinsing with water after acidic meals, waiting at least 30 minutes before brushing, using a soft-bristled toothbrush, and selecting a toothpaste designed for tooth enamel protection all reduce acid stress. Consistent implementation of these habits supports natural remineralization, prevents unnecessary wear, and maintains tooth enamel strength over time.

Use Sensodyne Pronamel for Tooth Enamel Protection

"Sensodyne Pronamel's formulation backed by 20 years of scientific research is a proven ally in tooth enamel protection." It strengthens weakened surfaces and encourages remineralization, creating a durable barrier against acid attacks. TToothpastes with optimized formulations are especially effective for individuals whose diets are frequently acidic, providing targeted protection and maintaining natural tooth whiteness and resilience.

Benefits of Sensodyne Pronamel

Tooth enamel care is the foundation of oral health—not just aesthetics. Mindful eating, disciplined oral hygiene, and the right tooth enamel-focused toothpaste can safeguard teeth for decades. By prioritizing tooth enamel protection today, you ensure reduced sensitivity, healthier teeth, and a lasting, confident smile free from avoidable dental complications.

Simple Facts Worth Knowing

- Tooth Enamel doesn't come back once it's gone.
- Acidic foods and drinks gradually erode enamel over time leading to problems like Sensitivity, Yellowing and Cavities.
- Sensodyne Pronamel is scientifically proven to protect against everyday acid erosion.
- Regular use of Pronamel helps maintain strength, appearance, and overall oral resilience.
- Make Sensodyne Pronamel a Smarter Choice for Daily Oral Care.

SENSODYNE PRONAMEL

"I recommend using Sensodyne Pronamel toothpaste daily."

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PhD, Haleon R&D Expert

"Acids in everyday **foods and drinks damage your tooth enamel**"

CITRUS FRUITS

TEA/ COFFEE

COLA

Good oral health starts with a strong enamel, the outer protective layer of our teeth. But acids in food and drinks weaken it every day. Once your enamel is gone, you can get dental problems like Sensitivity, Yellowing and Cavities.

SENSITIVITY

YELLOWING

CAVITIES

Backed by over 20 years of research, Sensodyne Pronamel's advanced scientific formula helps absorb minerals deep into the enamel, to give you 2X stronger enamel protection.

2X STRONGER ENAMEL PROTECTION*

Creative visualisation. *Fluoride strengthens enamel by promoting remineralisation and inhibiting demineralisation. Featherstone, J D. (1999) In an in vitro lab test vs mouth's natural defense (Data on file). PMID: 10086924. © 2025 Haleon Group of Companies. Trademarks are owned by or licensed to the Haleon Group of Companies. All rights reserved. Zero, Domenick T, and Adrian Lussi (2005), PMID: 16167607. Lussi, A, and T Jaeggi (2008), PMID: 18228059. Tahmassebi, J F et al (2014), PMID: 24072423. PM-IN-PRO-25-00015

Divine circularity: Temples compost devotee offerings

Sacred offerings gain second life as Koramangala temples compost flowers, leaves, creating pious fertiliser through community-led sustainable initiatives

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TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

Increasingly, temples in Bengaluru are going green. These places of worship are doing so by composting flowers and leaves offered by the devotees. If that was not enough, some of the temples are also creating 'pious' compost from the sacred flowers and leaves.

Two temples in Koramanagala have recently set up an in-house composter showcasing 'divine circularity in action'. At Sri Saibaba Temple in 7th cross in Koramanagala, a complete zero-waste system is now in place. All 'nirmalya', or offerings

The leaf and flower composter being installed at a temple in Koramangala

by devotees that contain stale flowers and other remains offered to the deity earlier, will be composted on-site, letting nature take its course.

In about 3 months, the temple

> "We are currently analysing if the system can be set up without causing inconvenience to devotees or residents living around the temple premises
> – KK Prakash, Priest

will harvest this 'pious' or 'divine' compost, which can be offered to devotees, creating a sustainable revenue stream while closing the loop.

These best practices in flower and leaf management have recently been adopted by yet another temple, Ganesha Temple, in the area.

The compost created under this initiative, taken up voluntarily by the Inner Wheel Clubs of Bangalore, Koramangala, will be different from regular compost as it is prepared just from 'nirmalya', a representative of the Club said.

"Many devotees do not like to use compost generated using food waste for sacred plants such as basil. However, compost made from 'nirmalya' will be as divine as it can get. As of now, the plan is to sell the compost to devotees so the temples can make it a sustainable process," said Padmashree Balaram of Inner Wheel Club of Bangalore, Koramangala. The temples say they plan to become zero-waste over the coming months by setting up a wet waste composting system on the premises.

"Once the compost is generated, we will have a better idea of how to use this product. We are also planning to have a wet-waste composting system on our campus. We hand out a lot of 'prasadam' everyday and currently our wet waste is being collected by BSWML. We are currently analysing if the system can be set up without causing inconvenience to devotees or residents living around the temple premises," said KK Prakash, a priest at Ganesh Temple in Koramangala.

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IMPACT: Swift action

Bagalagunte

After the issue was highlighted by BM, BESCOM cleared the electric poles obstructing the footpath near MEI Layout.

Signal blindspot

Hesaraghatta

A poorly placed traffic signal near a mart on Hesaraghatta Road remains invisible to motorists approaching from the Bonemill side, causing frequent signal jumping.

Repeat digging

Ittamaduvu

The newly tarred 2nd Main Road at Ittamaduvu is set to be dug up within a week, with pipes already laid along the stretch.

Children celebrate city's unsung traffic heroes

The Traffic Police Park on St Mark's Road witnessed an inspiring celebration on Friday as the Children's Movement for Civic Awareness (CMCA) marked the 18th annual 'Celebrating My City Traffic Police' day. The event, supported by the GoZe Foundation, honoured Bengaluru's traffic police and constables, widely regarded as the city's unsung heroes. The celebration marked the culmination of awareness sessions, school campaigns, and student visits to traffic stations and junctions to thank personnel for their tireless service. Through this initiative, CMCA aims to foster empathy among children and instil civic responsibility, especially respect for traffic rules in a rapidly growing city. Over 40 traffic police personnel and 60–70 students from 15 schools participated. Students presented handmade thank-you cards and flowers, acknowledging officers' efforts in ensuring road safety.

Addressing the gathering, Joint Commissioner of Police (Traffic) Karthik Reddy said such initiatives help build civic sense and contribute to a more disciplined city.

— BMB

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After two decades, robbery accused held

The Jayanagar police have arrested an accused who had been absconding for nearly 24 years in connection with a robbery case registered in 2002 and produced him before the court.

According to police, the incident took place on September 18, 2002, around 12.45 pm, at the complainant's residence, Keshava Krupa, located opposite Hot Chips in 4th Block, Jayanagar. Three unidentified men allegedly barged into the house, threatened the complainant with a long knife and robbed him of ₹400 in cash, clothes worth around ₹1,000, three wristwatches, a camera and two spectacles. A case was registered under relevant sections of the IPC.

During the investigation, police arrested three accused — Mahesh alias Dairy Mahesh, Mahalinga bin Parashuram and Manish alias Muneshwar — and later filed a charge sheet. However, Mahalinga, who was out on bail, absconded after vacating his address and failed to appear in court, following which the case was classified as a Long Pending Register matter.

After sustained efforts, police traced and arrested Mahalinga on January 28, 2026, and produced him before the 2nd ACJM Court. Senior officers commended the team for the arrest. —BMB

Child refuses school after alleged assault

A 27-year-old woman has lodged a police complaint alleging physical abuse of her 10-year-old son by a teacher at a private school in Laggere, under the limits of Nandini Layout police station.

The complainant, Lakshmi, a resident of the area for over 11 years, stated that her son, a Class 4 student at a private school in Lakshmidevi Nagar, was allegedly assaulted by his teacher, identified as Anglina, on January 10. According to the complaint, the teacher hit the child on his legs, hands and fingers with a thick stick after he failed to complete his homework.

Teacher allegedly struck child for not doing homework

The matter came to light on January 12 when Lakshmi visited the school and found her son crying. She approached the school's HR department, following which the management allegedly assured her that the teacher would be suspended. Police were later alerted through the 112 helpline.

However, Lakshmi later learnt from other students that the teacher continued to attend classes. Distressed by the incident, the child has refused to return to school. Following an unsatisfactory response from the management, Lakshmi filed a formal complaint seeking legal action. Police said the case is under investigation. —BMB

Confident Group chief dies by suicide

Founder and Chairman of the Confident Group, CJ Roy, died by suicide on Friday afternoon after allegedly shooting himself with a licensed pistol at his office near Richmond Circle in central Bengaluru, following an Income Tax raid, police said.

According to officials, the incident occurred around 3 pm inside Roy's private office located in Langford Town, under the limits of the Ashok Nagar police station. The tragedy reportedly followed follow-up searches and questioning by Income Tax Department officials in connection with raids conducted on the Confident Group in December 2025. Police confirmed that the department had been probing allegations of tax evasion and that Roy had been questioned over the past two days.

After the incident, office staff rushed Roy to a private hospital in HSR Layout. However, doctors declared him brought dead before treatment could begin.

Following the incident, Ashok Nagar police cordoned off the premises and launched an investigation. The SOCO team and forensic experts examined the scene, and the firearm was seized for analysis. Roy's body has been sent for post-mortem examination to ascertain the exact cause of death. DCP (Central Division) Akshay and senior police officials inspected the spot. Based on a complaint filed by a company director, police have registered a case and further investigation is underway. —BMB

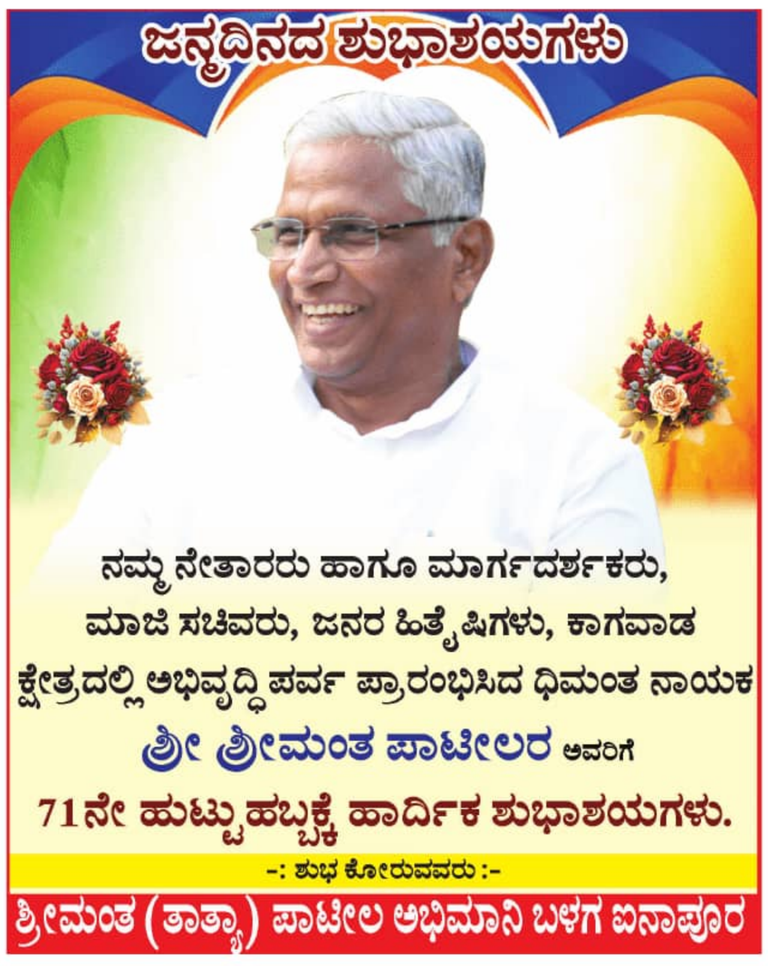
BJP Karnataka X post faces cyber complaint

A complaint has been filed with the Cyber Crime Police Station seeking legal action over an allegedly defamatory and misleading post on an 'X' (formerly Twitter) account targeting the Karnataka government and its leaders.

According to the complaint filed on January 29, 2026, by Narendra, an advocate associated with Vanguard Law, a distorted image was posted on the official 'X' handle of BJP Karnataka (@BJP4Karnataka). The post allegedly carried edited photographs of the Hon'ble Chief Minister, Deputy Chief Ministers, and other ministers holding constitutional posts, branding them as "Scam."

The images were accompanied by a derogatory article titled, "This is the real story of the @INCKarnataka government's Scam Empire that is swindling Karnataka day and night..." The complainant alleged that the photographs were deliberately morphed and that words such as "loot" and "scam" were used without any supporting evidence.

The complaint stated that the post was intended to tarnish the image of public representatives, mislead citizens, and create hatred and unrest in society through digital media. It sought legal action against the unidentified administrator of the account and others involved. Police are examining the complaint and digital evidence, and an investigation is underway. —BMB



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'Sita Ramam' pair Dulquer Salmaan and Mrunal Thakur are reuniting for 'Bheegi Bheegi'

>> PAGE 16

67 tigers, 201 elephants die in 3+ years

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

factor, especially in cases involving injured or diseased animals.

A retired forest official said, "Karnataka has a vast and complex wildlife landscape, with 41 protected areas, including five tiger reserves, 27 wildlife sanctuaries and 10 departmental elephant camps, spread across the Western Ghats and forest fringes. Hence, the presence of trained wildlife veterinarians is crucial not just for treatment, but also for handling capture operations, tranquilisation during conflict situations and conducting post-mortems when animals die. Despite this, several sanctioned posts remain unfilled. Vacancies exist at Bhadra, BRT and Anshi-Dandeli tiger reserves, as well as in the Mangaluru, Shivamogga and Hassan forest circles."

Currently, veterinarians posted at Bandipur and Nagarahole tiger reserves, Bannerghatta National Park, Mysuru, Bengaluru and Kodagu circles are drawn from the Animal Husbandry Department. While they are qualified doctors, critics argue that their academic training focuses on domestic animals. "There are no specialist wildlife doctors in the state. We have been urging the government since 2019 to appoint trained wildlife veterinarians, but nothing has moved," said Bengaluru-based Joseph Hoover, former member of the State Wildlife Board, Bengaluru. "Vets trained to treat cows, dogs and livestock are being assigned wildlife cases, and this has led to repeated lapses and avoidable deaths," he added.

Forest Minister Eshwar Khandre said the government has taken note of the issue. "The Finance Department has given approval for direct recruitment to fill specialist wildlife veterinary posts. Instructions have been issued to begin the process immediately and complete recruitment within six months," he said.

According to the minister, approval has been granted to recruit 15 specialists, and until the process is completed, the Forest Department will continue to take support from the Animal Husbandry Department.

Just 2-3% cases end up in crime, most are runaways, say police

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

in cases of missing children and missing persons, following directions of the Supreme Court and High Courts. A senior police official told BM that as per Supreme Court guidelines, every case of a missing minor is treated as a case of kidnapping. "Minors, especially those in the vulnerable age group of 16, 17 and 18 years, go missing for multiple reasons. Whenever such cases are reported, they are registered as kidnapping cases and taken up with utmost seriousness," the official said.

The official added that nearly 99 per cent of missing minor cases are eventually traced due to focused and sustained efforts by the police. "Given the risk of human trafficking, all missing children cases are treated with high priority, and the number of cases detected has increased due to improved monitoring and investigation," the officer said.

According to a senior official, thousands of missing cases are reported across the city every year. "During the first three months, missing minor cases are probed by local police stations. After three months, it is considered as human trafficking and such cases are transferred to the Anti-Human Trafficking Unit, where intensified efforts are made to trace the children," he said. Officials noted that cases that remain untraced are largely due to specific, case-related complexities.

"The biggest challenge in tracing missing children is the lack of information," explained a senior police official. The official said that in many cases, rescued or located children are unable to provide accurate home addresses or contact numbers, which delays reunification with their families. "Children found at railway stations or bus stops are often handed over to shelter homes, from where some run away again, further complicating efforts. Many children do not possess mobile phones, making it difficult to understand their background or state of mind. If a child has access to social media, investigators may gather clues about their movements or circumstances, but such leads are often unavailable," the official said.

Police officials also say that only 2 to 3% of cases are involved in crimes such as ransom for begging, sexual assault or any other crimes. Most of the cases involve elopement or minors running away from home after parents scold them, police said.

New SOPs

The circular dated January 21, issued by the Director General and Inspector General of Police from Nrupathunga Road, was accompanied by an SOP that states that cases relating to missing children between the age group of 3 to 8 years who couldn't be rescued in four months should be transferred to the anti-human trafficking unit automatically.

As per the directive, District Missing Persons Units (DMPUs) will be constituted in every district and across all divisions of the Bengaluru City Commissionerate. These units will function under the District or City Crime Records Bureau and act as nodal points for data analysis and inter-district, inter-state coordination. Further, every police station will form a Missing Persons Squad, led by a PSI, to ensure prompt registration, investigation and follow-up of cases. Senior officers have been directed to strictly monitor digital data uploads and ensure accountability until missing persons are traced.

The SOP mandates immediate FIR registration for missing children under 18 years of age, with urgent actions in the first 48 hours, including alerts to PCR, SCRB, NCRB, and portals like TrackTheMissingChild and Mission Vatsalya. The SOP mandates immediate registration of FIRs in all cases of missing minors, treating them as kidnapping cases in line with Supreme Court directions. It emphasises that no waiting period is allowed for lodging complaints.

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I, MANJUNATHA, Residing at No. 43/8, 10th Cross, Naganathpur Doctor Layout, Bangalore - 560099, have changed my name to MANJUNATH, vide affidavit dated 28/11/2025, sworn before notary Venkataraju H G, Bangalore.

I, Rajitha Uday, W/o Sri. P Uday Bhanu, R/o Flat No. 2D, Rajeshwari Dwellings, 1st Cross, Ideal Homes Township, Rajarajeshwari Nagar, Bengaluru - 560098. have changed my name from Rajitha Sathyanath to Rajitha Uday Sworn before notary S. P Thulasikrishna dated 29.01.2026

I, Nagina Yadav, residing at No. 274,1 FI, 1st Main, Rama krishnappa Layout, Geddala halli, Sanjay Nagar, RMV 2nd Stage, Bengaluru- 560 094, have changed my name to RAM NAGINA YADAV, vide affidavit dt: 09/01/ 2026 before notary V Anjanappa, B.lore.

I, JYOTI NAGESH BHAT W/o, Nagesh Devaru Bhat, resident at B 502, Kanchika Elegant Terraces, V Legacy Road, Aditya Layout BSK 3rd Stage, Hosakerehalli, Bengaluru-560085. have changed my name to JYOTHI BHAT vide Affidavit date 30.01.2026 sworn before notary R Raghunath Rao, Bangalore.

I, SYED AATIF AHMED SYED ALTHAF AHMED Date of birth: 24/10/1995 S/o Syed Althaf Ahmed R/at No: 21,7th main, Dargah road, Bateshwara layout, Bidarahalli village, Bangalore:560049 have changed my name to SYED AATIF AHMED vide affidavit dated: 30/1/2026 Before Notary K.V.Mani Bangalore.

I, M K MRUNNALINI RAYI D/o. KUMARASWAMY K M, resident at No. 34/8 1st Floor, Canara Bank Quarters, Nandini Layout, Bengaluru 560096 have changed my name to M K MRUNALINI RAYI vide Affidavit date 30.01.2026 sworn before notary R Raghunath Rao, Bangalore

I, BINDU SREEDHAR MENON R/o NO 888 5th Block 7th Main 2nd Cross Vidyaranyapura BEL Layout Bangalore 560097 have changed my name to BINDU B G for all purposes

I, Nikita B Shetty R/o No.95/110, 1st Main, 3rd cross, Near Nagasandra metro station, Bengaluru 560073 have changed my name to Nikita Shetty. I shall be called by this name for all purposes

I, Mubarak A, D/o Ajaas born on 02/02/1997, Ages about 28 Years residing at No 206,Vidhyanagar Cross, Bettahalasur, Bangalore, Karnataka-562157 have changed my name to Aqsa Mubarak vide affidavit dated 21-01-2026 at Bangalore

CHANGE OF NAME

I, **SHYLAJA KOPPARAM ANJANEYA SETTY**, W/o KOPPARAM ANJANEYA SETTY, Resident of # 1559, Old Hospital road, Mulbagal Town, Kolar District. I have changed my name from **SHYLAJA ANJANEYA SETTY KOPPARAM** to **SHYLAJA KOPPARAM ANJANEYA SETTY** for all the purpose. Sworn before **Manjunath**, Advocate & Notary, Mulabagal vide affidavit dated: 29/01/2026

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Award recognises outstanding service in the medical field | Ministers, MPs and expert doctors stress need for government–private partnership to strengthen rural healthcare services

VK and BM Healthcare Excellence Conclave felicitates 36 achiever doctors

Ministers and experts engaged in a panel discussion on enhancing healthcare and medical services and identifying key interventions

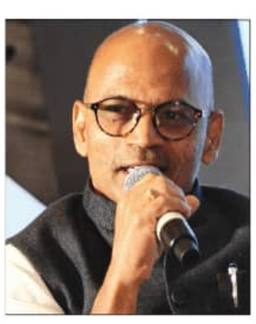
Vijay Karnataka hosted the prestigious VK & BM Health Excellence and Conclave Conclave on January 21, focusing on reforms in health and medical services, preventive care, technology adoption, and rural healthcare. State ministers, MPs, and medical experts discussed challenges, solutions, and government objectives, including public–private partnerships in hospital management. The event also honoured 36 doctors with Lifetime Achievement Awards, recognising their contributions to advancing healthcare in the state.

Quality Healthcare Reaching the Last Mile

Minister For Health and Family Welfare Dinesh Gundu Rao said the government aims to provide quality, affordable healthcare to all, emphasising preventive care as non-communicable diseases rise with economic development. He highlighted the need for public education on lifestyle and health, noting private sector support is secondary. Rao pointed out inefficiencies in government facilities and the role of private dialysis centres, stressing reforms to improve system efficiency, monitor private institutions, and prioritise preventive measures.

Treatment Costs Can Be Controlled Only Through Government Hospitals

Minister for Medical Education and Skill Development Dr Sharan Prakash Patil said the state is strengthening public healthcare and medical education to provide quality services at the grassroots. Karnataka has 71 medical colleges, with plans for a government college, cancer hospital, and trauma centre in every district. The state produces around 7,500 doctors annually, with over 6,000 postgraduate seats. New super-speciality hospitals and skill labs are being set up, including a free organ transplant hospital in Ballari in partnership with the Azim Premji Foundation.



Affordable Services for the Poor

Bengaluru Rural MP Dr C.N. Manjunath urged private hospitals in tier-2 and tier-3 cities to get ten-year tax exemptions to improve rural healthcare. He highlighted doctor shortages in villages, suggesting incentives, better salaries, PG NEET marks for rural service, and security measures. Dr Manjunath recommended 24x7 hub-and-spoke health centres, AI-driven cost-effective care, uniform antibiotic policies, and budget allocation for immunotherapy, while stressing attention to staffing alongside infrastructure.

Expert Opinions and Suggestions

Former president of the Indian Association of Cardiovascular and Thoracic Surgeons (IACTS), Dr Vivek Jawali said urban healthcare benefits from private and corporate support, but rural areas rely entirely on the government. He noted PPP models often fall short due to differing objectives. He suggested expanding successful models like Jayadeva Institute for cardiac care to other cities and emergencies, establishing medical colleges in every district, strengthening PHCs and hospitals with CSR funds, using technology to link rural centres, involving retired experts, and prioritising intensive care for young children.

Government to Build Infrastructure, Private Sector to Manage

Dr Ramamohan S. Bhatt suggested the government build healthcare infrastructure but let the private sector manage it with incentives like tax breaks or concessional utilities. He favoured incentive-based rural service for doctors over mandatory laws and called for more centres of excellence in nephrology, proposing six to seven across Karnataka, similar to institutions like Jayadeva and NIMHANS, to expand specialised care throughout the state.

Need for Training in Advanced Technology

Dr Mohan Keshavamurthy, Chairman of the Urology Specialty Council for the Fortis group said India has advanced technologies like robotic surgery but lacks sufficient training opportunities. Surgical skills still rely on the guru–shishya model, forcing many doctors to train abroad. He urged the private sector to train government doctors at district centres to increase skilled surgeons. While building hospitals is easy, ensuring trained surgeons are available year-round remains a challenge, making skill development and continuous training essential.

Knowledge Partner
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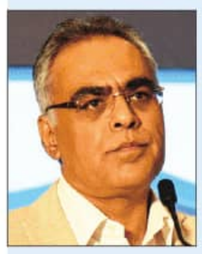
Injury To World Glory

Olympic athlete Anju Bobby George recalled a challenging phase in 2000 when a sports injury left her unable to walk for nearly two years, highlighting the lack of sports medicine awareness in India. While training in the US before the 2003 World Championship, she learned she was born with only one kidney and was advised not to compete. Supported by her husband and coach, she persevered, developing mental strength that helped her win India's first World Championship medal.

Creating Awareness

Actor Radhika Narayan stressed the importance of addressing mental health issues and removing the stigma associated with them. "Even today, talking about mental health is seen as a taboo in society. There is a fear that if one speaks about depression or anxiety, people may label them as mentally unstable. It is important to remove this fear and hesitation," she said.

Driving the State's Progress



Deepak Saluja, CEO of Vijaya Karnataka and Bangalore Mirror said the newspaper's role goes beyond reporting news. "Vijay Karnataka is not limited to just publishing news. It is our traditional responsibility to act as a catalyst for the progress of Karnataka in whatever way possible," he said. He added that people have immense trust in the newspaper. "There is a strong belief among readers that if something appears in Vijaya Karnataka, it is true. We are proud that we consistently deliver the most credible news to our readers," he said. Saluja added that Karnataka's identity on the global stage as an information technology hub is a matter of pride. "We are waiting for the day when Karnataka is recognised as the number one medical hub not just in India and Asia, but possibly in the entire world." he said.

Journalism with Social Responsibility

"Along with news reporting, Vijay Karnataka is actively engaged in continuous social initiatives," said Editor Sudarshan Channangihalli. He said the newspaper regularly provides health-related information, creates public awareness and honours achievers in the healthcare sector through such platforms. Vijay Karnataka has also run sustained campaigns on issues such as food safety, organ donation, road safety and drug abuse, in association with the government, police, educational institutions and hospitals.

"We have been providing continuous service for many years. Vijay Karnataka has recognised our work with this award and encouraged us further. We are grateful to Vijay Karnataka."

— Dr Shankar V.,
Senior Consultant, General Physician, Manipal Hospital, Malleswaram

"We thank Vijay Karnataka for recognising our cardiology department among the top three. This award motivates us to serve patients with even greater care and dedication."

— Dr. Kishore KS, Chief Interventional Cardiologist, Sagar Hospitals, Banashankari

"Shekhar Hospital will continue providing treatment at affordable rates to patients. This award inspires doctors to deliver even more dedicated service."

— Dr. Rajashekar Y. L.,
CEO & The Medical Director, Shekar Eye Hospital, J.P. Nagar

"I have been working in healthcare for the past 24 years. I am grateful to Vijay Karnataka for recognising my contributions to the medical field with this award."

— Dr. K. N Trivikram Rao,
Founder-Dr. Trivikram's All Smiles Dental

Receiving this award alongside my father is a special moment. We are grateful to Vijay Karnataka for recognising the work of Rajarajeswari Medical College Hospital. This is an unforgettable experience, and I thank Vijay Karnataka for this opportunity."

— Dr. Santosh Saklecha,
Founder and Director-Ghar Pe Diagnostics

It is a proud moment that Vijaya Karnataka has recognised our Medical-oncology and Hemato-oncology services at Fortis, Bannerghatta Road. The event also provided an opportunity to meet senior experts. This award motivates us for the next steps in our journey."

— Dr. Niti Krishna Raizada,
Principal Director, Medical Oncology & Hemato Oncology, Fortis Hospitals, Bengaluru

"I am delighted that my contributions to dentistry have been recognised with this award. Vijaya Karnataka's recognition has further strengthened my sense of responsibility."

—Dr. Shilpa Shashikiran,
Founder & Chief Dental Surgeon, 26 years of service, Orchards Dental & Implant Center Sadashiva Nagar

"This award inspires other doctors to perform their best. It is a recognition that belongs to patients, my team and fellow doctors."

— Dr. Raghunath Krishnappa,
Director and Head of Urological Oncology and Robotic surgery, HCG Cancer Hospital

"It is a matter of pride to accept this award on behalf of the Kauvery Group of Hospitals, Bengaluru."

— Dr Ramamohan S. Bhatt,
Director, Nephrology, Kauvery Hospital

"We thank Vijay Karnataka for recognising the achievements of Aster Hospital. This award motivates our team to work with even more enthusiasm."

— Dr Naveen Ganjoo and Dr. Rommel S.,
Senior Consultants, Liver Surgery, Aster RV Hospital

"We congratulate Vijay Karnataka for giving us the opportunity to participate in such a wonderful programme. This award has inspired us to deliver even better care."

— Oncology Department, Sagar Hospitals

"I am deeply grateful to Vijay Karnataka for recognising the work of Rajarajeswari Medical College with this award."

—Major General (Dr.) N. Srinath,
Professor and Head, Department of Urology.

"I thank Vijay Karnataka for this award. It inspires me to deliver even better service and brings immense joy."

— Dr. Vijay Girish,
Senior Consultant, Sports Orthopaedics & Arthroscopic Surgeon, Robotic Hip & Knee Joint Replacement Surgeon
HOSMAT Hospital, Vijaysheela Sports-Orthopaedics Clinic

"It is truly heartening to have our dedicated services in Ayurveda recognised. The award for our work in the field of diabetes belongs to our entire team."

— Dr. Yamuna B. S.,
Founder, Guduchi Ayurveda, A National Brand for Diabetes Reversal, Guduchi Ayurveda

Receiving this award for our work in cardiac care at Fortis, Bannerghatta Road, is a proud moment for the entire team. It inspires us to deliver better services in the field of cardiac sciences and to pursue new research."

— Dr. Vivek Jawali,
Chairman - Cardiac Sciences, Fortis Hospitals, Bengaluru

"Vijay Karnataka has recognised my work in orthopaedic surgery and joint replacement. This award motivates me to contribute even more in this field."

— Dr. P. C. Jagadeesh,
Senior Orthopaedic Robotic Joint Replacement and Arthroscopy Surgeon
Kauvery Hospital

"This award has given our work greater recognition wand support. We thank Vijay Karnataka for acknowledging our service."

— Dr. Akshay Dhanda,
Senior Consultant-Surgeon, Manipal Hospital Jayanagar

"Vijay Karnataka's initiative to recognise achievers in the medical field is truly commendable. I extend my heartfelt congratulations to the entire Vijay Karnataka team for acknowledging our work."

— Dr. Mohan Keshavamurthy,
Principal Director - Renal Sciences, Fortis Hospitals, Bengaluru

"It is a matter of pride that Vijay Karnataka has recognised my service in the field of plastic surgery and honoured me with this award. It motivates me not only to provide advanced treatment but also to create greater awareness about plastic surgery."

— Dr. Amrika Seshadri, Director
Dr. Amrika's Aesthetics- Cosmetic and Plastic Surgery Center

"We are grateful for the award conferred in the renal sciences and transplant field. This recognition further motivates us to deliver advanced renal & transplant care with expertise and innovative approaches."

Renal Sciences and Transplant Team, SPARSH Group of Hospitals

"We are thankful to Vijay Karnataka for this award. It inspires us to continue our duty of serving patients with care and compassion."

— Dr Sneha Shetty,
Clinical Director, Vriksh Fertility

"I am delighted that Vijay Karnataka has recognised our efforts and services in cancer treatment through this award. It has strengthened our resolve to serve patients with greater commitment and dedication."

— Dr. Anil Kumar M. R.,
Chairman & Managing Director, Oncoville Cancer Hospital

"We are proud and grateful that Vijay Karnataka has recognised the Orthopaedics & Joint Replacement team at SPARSH Group of Hospitals, celebrating our shared commitment to precision surgery and patient-centred care."

Orthopedics & Joint Replacement Team, SPARSH Group of Hospitals

"This programme that recognises and honours doctors is truly commendable. Receiving this award brings me great joy."

— Dr. Bikkamchand S., Chairman, Santosh Diagnostic & Scan Centre

"We are honoured that Vijay Karnataka has recognised the collective work and clinical excellence of our Cardiology team at SPARSH Group of Hospitals. Receiving this recognition alongside other distinguished medical specialists is a proud moment for our department."

Cardiac Sciences Team, SPARSH Group of Hospitals

"It is a matter of pride and joy that Vijay Karnataka has recognised the contributions and services of Sparsh Group of Hospitals. This recognition has strengthened our sense of responsibility."

Neurosciences Team, SPARSH Group of Hospitals

"Being honoured for my service in bone and joint replacement and keyhole surgery is a proud moment. I thank the Vijay Karnataka team and my mentors for their support."

— Dr. Shankar. E.,
Chairman, MD and Consultant Orthopedic Surgeon, Dr Shankar's Orthopedic Specialty Centre, Basaveshwaranagar

"I thank Vijay Karnataka for recognising my work through this award. It has increased my sense of responsibility in the field of orthopaedic surgery and robotic joint replacement."

— Dr. Sunil G. Kini,
Head of Department and Senior Consultant Orthopaedic and Robotic Joint Replacement Surgeon, Manipal Hospitals

"Receiving this award brings immense happiness. Our goal is to ensure that every patient, irrespective of financial background, has access to world-class treatment."

— Dr. Girish B. Navasundi,
Senior Consultant & Interventional Cardiologist, Certified TAVI Specialist, Director Cath Lab, Apollo Hospitals, Bannerghatta Road

"Receiving the Vijay Karnataka award for my service in the medical field has added to my sense of honour. It has further strengthened my commitment to future work related to cardiac care."

— Dr. Ashwini Kumar Pasarad,
Senior Consultant - Sri Jayadeva Institute of Cardiovascular Sciences & Research, Chief Cardiothoracic & Transplant Surgeon Sparsh Hospital - RR Nagar

"Winning this prestigious award is a proud moment for the entire team. It has encouraged us to pursue further innovation and research. We thank Vijay Karnataka for this recognition."

— Dr. Narayan Hulse,
Principal Director, Orthopaedics & Joint Replacement Surgeon, Fortis Hospital, Bannerghatta Road, Bengaluru

"I have been serving in a government hospital for the past 16 years, and it is truly motivating that Vijay Karnataka has recognised my work with this award. It inspires me to serve with even greater dedication."

— Dr Girish Gowda,
Maxillofacial Surgeon, Sanjay Gandhi Institute of Trauma and Orthopedics

"This initiative by Vijay Karnataka is truly commendable. I am happy that my service in plastic and cosmetic surgery has been recognised through this award."

— Dr Srikanth V.,
Consultant Plastic & Cosmetic Surgeon
Clinique Belle & Manipal Hospital HAL Airport Road

"This prestigious Vijay Karnataka award has increased my sense of responsibility. I am glad that my work in rural healthcare has been recognised and encouraged. It motivates me to continue my service with renewed commitment."

— Dr Geetha,
Founder, Krishna Hospital, Nanjangud, Mysuru

"Receiving this award in the field of neurosciences is a moment of celebration for our entire team. This recognition inspires us to adopt newer technologies and drive innovation in neurological care."

— Dr. Rajakumar V. Deshpande,
Director - Neurosciences, Fortis Hospital, Bannerghatta Road, Bengaluru

"I am grateful for the award recognising my contribution to the treatment and rehabilitation of sportspersons. This honour motivates me to continue delivering better care."

—Dr. Pradeep Kocheeppan,
Senior Consultant – Orthopaedics & Sports Medicine, Apollo Hospitals

Kanakapura Road's quiet realty takeoff

Connectivity, green spaces, and affordability are driving Kanakapura Road's property boom

Kanakapura Road draws families and investors seeking space, value, and convenience

Kanakapura Road has quietly moved from being an overlooked stretch on the city's outskirts to one of Bengaluru's most promising real estate destinations. With infrastructure upgrades, steady demand and relative affordability, the region is fast catching the eye of homebuyers and investors alike.

One of Kanakapura's biggest advantages is connectivity. NICE Road and the Metro corridor have cut travel time to key hubs such as JP Nagar, Jayanagar and Electronic City. "Earlier, Kanakapura felt far. Today, it is well connected to the heart of the city without the chaos," says Suresh Reddy, a real estate consultant.

Affordability remains another strong draw. While property prices in central and eastern parts of Bengaluru have surged, Kanakapura still offers value-for-money options. Apartments, villas and plotted developments are available at comparatively lower rates, making it attractive for first-time buyers as well as long-term investors. "You get larger spaces and better amenities here at prices that are no longer possible in older localities," notes Sunitha Gowda, who recently invested in a villa project off Kanakapura Road.

The area also scores high on liveability. Proximity to green zones, lakes and forest areas such as Bannerghatta adds to its appeal. Educational institutions, hospitals and retail spaces have followed residential growth, creating a self-sustaining ecosystem. "Kanakapura gives you the rare mix of nature and city life," says Samyukta Prakash, a resident of the area for over five years.

—Prakash VL

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Retail roars back with record leasing

India's retail sector saw unprecedented growth in 2025, with leasing across major cities reaching a record ~8.9 million sq ft, driven by a surge in quality supply and strong demand from both domestic and international retailers. CBRE South Asia's India Retail Figures H2 2025 report notes that total supply during the year rose to ~4.3 million sq ft, a 268 per cent jump from 2024, with Hyderabad alone contributing over half of these new spaces, followed by Mumbai and Delhi-NCR. During the second half of the year, around 2.1 million sq ft of retail space became operational, reflecting continued expansion.

"Retailers are increasingly embracing experiential formats—flagship stores, kiosks and Gen Z-focused outlets—to boost footfalls, dwell time and engagement," said Anshuman Magazine, Chairman and CEO, CBRE India. Fashion and apparel led leasing with a ~48 per cent share, followed by F&B at ~12 per cent and jewellery at ~8 per cent, including lab-grown diamond expansions. The report adds that landlords are monetising underused spaces through experiential zones to lift footfalls and extract rental premiums from adjoining F&B outlets.

—BMB

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Nelamangala gains ground as realty magnet

Investors eye Nelamangala for long-term gains on city outskirts

Nelamangala, rapidly growing on par with Bengaluru, is fast becoming a lucrative real estate destination in North Bengaluru, driven by excellent connectivity, the availability of premium plots and proximity to future Metro projects. Located around 28 km from the city centre and close to the Bengaluru–Tumakuru National Highway, the region has gained prominence due to proposed infrastructure projects, including plans for a new airport, and seamless road access. Areas surrounding Nelamangala, such as Dasanapura, Arasinakunte, Adarsha Nagar and the Dabaspet industrial zone, have witnessed rising residential and commercial activity, supported by schools, hospitals and employment-generating industries.

"Designated as one of Bengaluru's proposed satellite towns, Nelamangala is poised for accelerated development, with planned Metro, rail and hi-tech transport links enhancing mobility. Upcoming Metro connectivity, proximity to the Madavara Metro station and a distance of 52 km from Kempegowda International Airport further add to its appeal. With industries shifting from expensive hubs such as Peenya to nearby zones, Nelamangala is also evolving into a major industrial corridor, making this an opportune time for investors and homebuyers seeking long-term value appreciation on the city's outskirts," said Nitin Gowda, a property developer. **—Prakash VL**

Bengaluru leads India's flex office market

Bengaluru continues to anchor India's fast-expanding Global Capability Centre (GCC) ecosystem, with nearly 60 per cent of GCC bases operating from green-certified, Grade A flexible workspaces, accelerating the premiumisation of the city's flex office market. According to Vestian Research, GCCs now account for a significant share of flex space demand across India, but Bengaluru stands out as the largest hub, hosting over a third of the country's total flex stock. The study notes that while just over half of Bengaluru's flex centres are Grade A, nearly three-fourths of GCCs operating from flex spaces in the city are housed in premium buildings, with more than half located in green-certified facilities, underlining a strong preference for quality and sustainability.

The report said India hosts more than 1,750 GCC companies with close to 3,800 bases, driving over 40 per cent of office space demand over the past two years. Flex operators have emerged as key partners in this growth, offering speed, scalability and enterprise-grade infrastructure. Bengaluru leads the national flex market with a 33.2 per cent share, far ahead of NCR and Pune, as GCCs increasingly favour peripheral business districts for expansion due to better connectivity, competitive rentals and larger campuses. Vestian said India's flex stock is expected to cross 100 million sq ft by 2026, with Bengaluru likely to remain at the centre of this growth as global firms prioritise agile, sustainable and high-quality workspaces. **—BMB**

PRR revamp to boost city connectivity

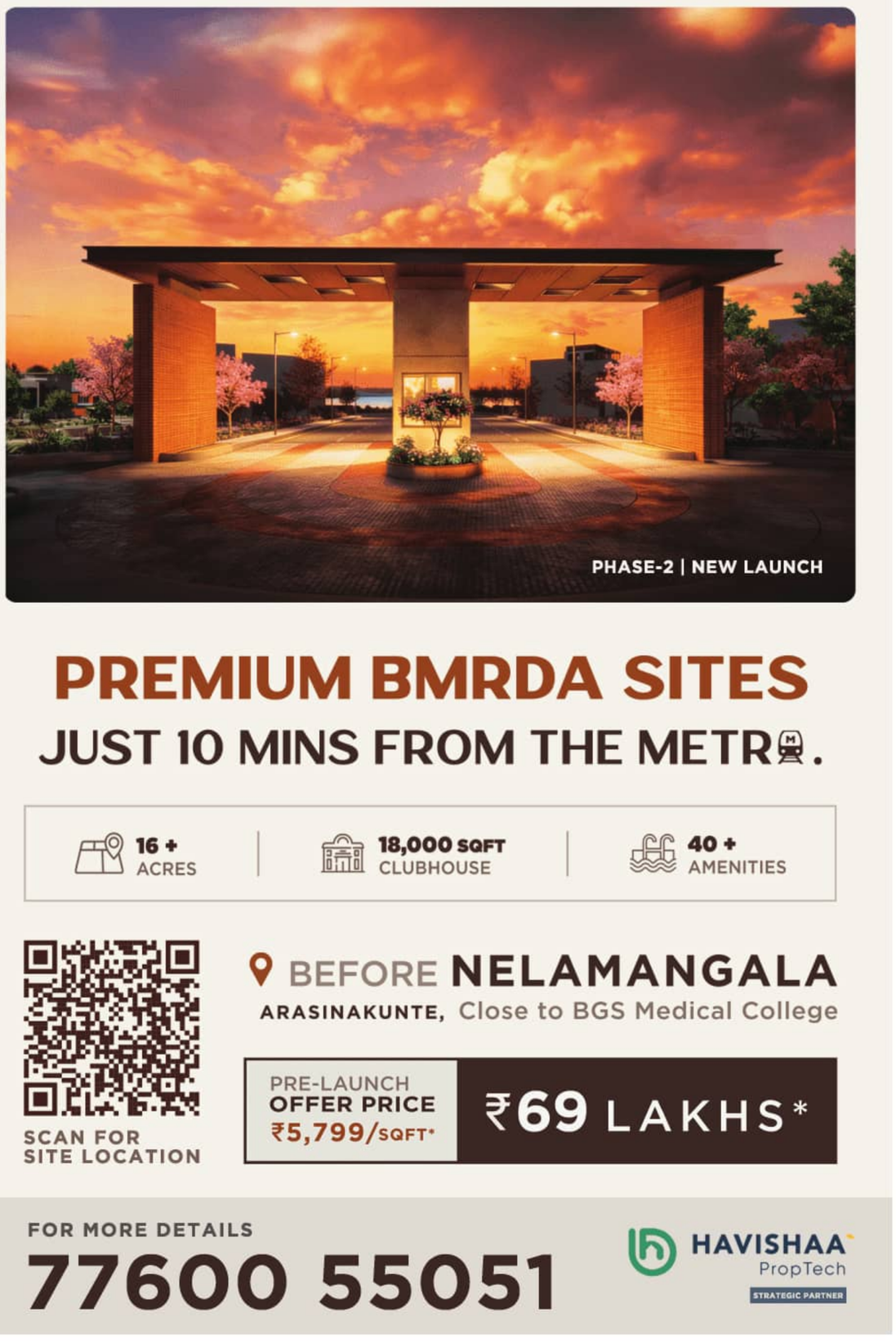
Bengaluru's Peripheral Ring Road, now called the Bengaluru Business Corridor (BBC), is set for a major upgrade, with the construction of a 23-km stretch connecting Kempegowda International Airport to NICE Road. The detailed project report (DPR) is ready, and first-phase civil work is expected to begin soon, with tenders likely to be floated by February or March. This segment will also link Tumakuru and Bellary roads and feature a toll collection point.

Sources said the corridor is planned in three phases: the first 23 km from the airport to NICE Road; the second 29 km from Hosur Road to Old Madras Road; and the third 18 km from Old Madras Road to Bellary Road, forming a Y-shaped connection with NICE Road. Land acquisition is progressing, with 500 farmers agreeing to part with their land and around 100 acres already acquired. The BDA aims to secure 50% of the land before calling tenders and 80% by contract finalisation. **—BMB**

Malur rises as affordable realty hub

With growing traffic congestion, pollution and high-pressure lifestyles in Bengaluru, more homebuyers and investors are turning to peaceful towns on the city's outskirts. Malur, in Kolar district, located about 60 km from Bengaluru, has emerged as a preferred destination for those seeking spacious, green surroundings with modern living options. Backed by ongoing infrastructure development, new projects and strong transport connectivity, Malur is fast gaining recognition as a promising real estate hub, offering premium residential plots at more affordable prices compared to areas such as Whitefield and Hoskote.

"Malur is also evolving into Bengaluru's next major industrial zone, driving strong demand for housing, rental homes and office spaces. The presence of industrial clusters and facilities such as the Adani Logistics Park has boosted employment and real estate prospects in the region. Excellent connectivity, including a nearby railway station, bus stand, the Bengaluru–Chennai Expressway and proximity to the international airport, further enhances its appeal," said Kavya Kumar, a real estate consultant. Developers said that with RERA-approved, A-khata premium sites and gated communities coming up close to industrial and commercial hubs, Malur is increasingly seen as a smart long-term investment choice for both end-users and investors. **—BMB**



Thanks to citizens, these roads are mulch obliged

Y Maheswara Reddy
c-y.reddy@timesofindia.com
TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

Motorists commuting along Brookfield Road in East Bengaluru can look forward to smoother rides this summer. Thanks to the efforts of local volunteers, a 500-metre stretch of the busy road will remain dust-free, with the median freshly mulched and painted to enhance both daytime comfort and nighttime visibility.

It is claimed that using wood chips in the median to address challenges of the coming summer and monsoon is a first-of-its-kind initiative. The project, undertaken by the Indira Belde Foundation in collaboration with DIATOZ Solutions, involved both painting and wood mulching of the median. "If every apartment complex or office or business establishment takes the responsibility of cleaning 100 metres of the median in front of their shops and establishments, we can do miracles for the street, city, state, and country," said Indira Belde, Founder and Chairperson of Indira Belde Foundation.

Indira expressed her gratitude to ward engineers, the work inspector, and traffic police for their cooperation during the wood-mulching initiative. Volunteers removed two to three inches of soil from the median and layered it with wood chips to provide a cleaner, dust-free surface. "Wood mulching, which is popular in foreign countries, will ensure road visibility at night, retains moisture during summer, reduces soil erosion in monsoon, controls weed growth, avoids skidding in wet conditions, tenhances plant health, and improves overall aesthetics," she said.

Volunteers gather to improve road conditions through wood-mulching initiative expected to offer many benefits

Expressing her delight at being part of the wood-mulching initiative, volunteer Chavi Jain said that a section of the median was painted and the soil was covered with wood chips.

TG Rajagopalan, an IT consultant, said he was delighted to be part of the wood-mulching initiative. "I want to be part of more and more such programmes in future," he said.

Volunteers worked on 500-metre stretch, removing soil from the median, covering it with wood chips, and painting it to improve visibility

'Foreign nationals cannot claim visa entitlement'

Right to decline grant or extension of visa is unfettered sovereign right and government is not required to furnish reasons while refusing visa, rules HC

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The Karnataka High Court has held that foreign nationals staying in India cannot insist on the grant or renewal of a visa as a matter of legal right, underscoring that decisions on visas fall within the sovereign powers of the State.

A division bench comprising Chief Justice Vibhu Bakhru and Justice CM Poonacha made the observation while dismissing an appeal filed by two foreign nationals who had challenged the refusal to extend their student visas and sought release from a detention centre.

In its judgment, the court noted that fundamental rights such as the freedom to move freely or reside anywhere in the country are guaranteed only to Indian citizens. "The right to decline a grant or extension of a visa is clearly an unfettered sovereign right," the bench observed, adding that the government is not required to furnish reasons while refusing or cancelling a visa.

The appellants had contended that their visas were cancelled without prior notice and that they were denied an opportunity to be heard. However, the court rejected the argument, stating that immigration control is an executive function and that a foreigner does not enjoy the same constitutional protections as a citizen in matters relating to entry or stay in India.

The bench further held that visas are issued at the discretion of the authorities and cannot be claimed as an entitlement. It also noted that, in the present case, the visas had already expired, leaving no scope for judicial intervention. With these observations, the court declined to interfere with the earlier order and dismissed the appeal.

HC declines foreign nationals' appeal challenging refusal to visa extension, stating foreigners lack constitutional protections enjoyed by citizens in matters of entry or stay in India

Court affirms restriction on ultrasound access

The Karnataka High Court recently declined to suspend a government circular that bars companions, including husbands, from entering the room where an ultrasound scan of a pregnant woman is conducted.

The petition was filed by a married couple challenging a March 18, 2024, circular issued by the State's Health and Family Welfare Department. The directive prohibits anyone — even a spouse — from being inside the ultrasound room during the scan. The couple argued that the husband should be allowed to accompany his pregnant wife during the procedure, especially since neither spouse intends to determine the sex of the unborn child.

The husband, who is himself an advocate, contended that the circular impinges on his wife's reproductive rights and that the state lacked the authority to impose such a blanket ban in all cases.

While the court acknowledged the couple's concerns and stated that it was "persuaded to accept the statement made by the petitioners," it refused to grant interim relief before hearing the State's arguments in full. In its order, the bench explained that even where there is an assurance that the husband's presence is not for sex determination, the court must consider broader implications.

The court made clear, "The request for interim order is not admitted at this stage," but it allowed the couple to continue pursuing their challenge to the circular. The petitioners have asked the High Court to declare the circular unconstitutional and violative of fundamental rights under Articles 14 and 21 of the Constitution, and to direct that the husband be permitted to stay with his wife during legally permitted ultrasound examinations. The matter is now slated to be heard again on February 24, 2026.

Association questions lack of OBC representation

The Advocates' Association, Bengaluru (AAB) has raised concerns over the absence of judges from Other Backward Classes (OBCs) in the latest recommendations for appointment to the Karnataka High Court.

In a representation submitted to Chief Justice Vibhu Bakhru, the Association pointed out that none of the ten advocates proposed for elevation from the Bar belong to OBC communities, including those classified under Most Backward Classes-A (BCM-A). Judges appointed under the Bar quota are selected directly from practising advocates, as opposed to those elevated from the judicial service.

Calling the omission troubling, the AAB said it reflects a continued lack of opportunities for lawyers from socially and educationally backward groups to be considered for judicial office. The Association urged the High Court Collegium to add at least two names from OBC or BCM-A backgrounds to the existing list to ensure broader representation.

IN BRIEF

Bacteria could be key to Mars exploration

Bacteria that thrive on Earth may not make it in the alien lands of Mars. A potential deterrent is perchlorate, a toxic chlorine-containing chemical discovered in Martian soil during various space missions.

Researchers at the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) recently investigated how bacteria that can mould Martian soil into brick-like structures fare in the presence of this chemical. They find that although perchlorate slows down bacterial growth, it also surprisingly leads to the formation of stronger bricks.

"Mars is an alien environment. What is going to be the effect of this new alien environment on Earth organisms is a very, very important scientific question that we have to answer," said Aloke Kumar, associate professor in the Department of Mechanical Engineering and corresponding author of the study published in PLOS One.

In previous studies, researchers used the soil bacterium Sporosarcina pasteurii to construct 'space bricks' from lunar or Martian soil, which could potentially be used to establish extraterrestrial habitats. When added to synthetic Martian or lunar soil along with urea and calcium, the bacterium produces calcium carbonate crystals (precipitates), which help glue the soil particles together into bricks, in a process called biocementation. The process also requires the natural adhesive guar gum, a powdery polymer extracted from guar beans.

In the current study, the authors used a more robust, native strain of the bacterium that they discovered in the soils of Bengaluru.

"Ultimately, the team's goal is to deploy this method as an alternative, sustainable building strategy, to rely less on carbon-intensive cement-based processes – both on Earth and Mars. Such technologies can also help make future Mars landing missions smoother – by helping build better roads, launch pads, and rover landing sites," said co-author Shubhanshu Shukla, an ISRO astronaut who is pursuing his Master's degree at IISc.

—BMB

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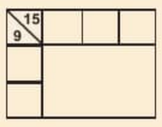
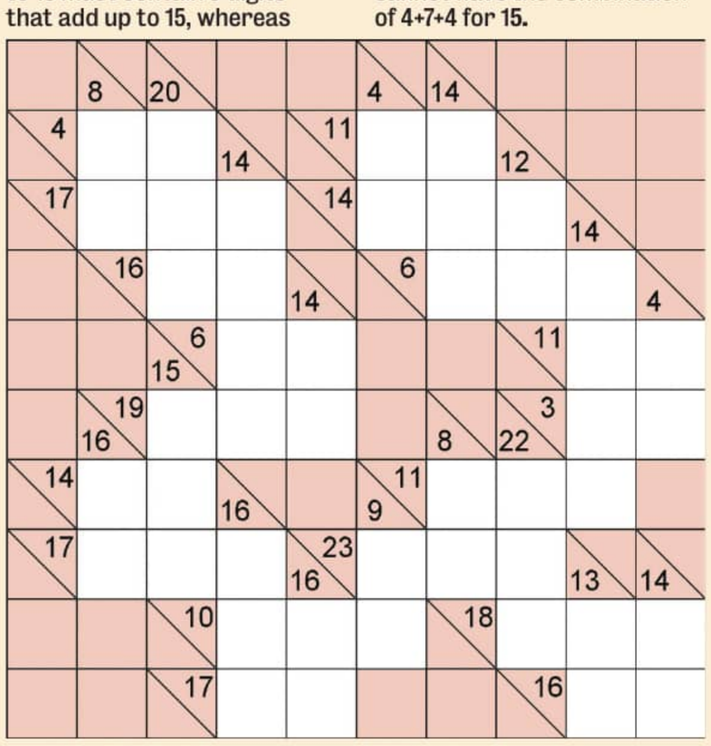
Kakuro

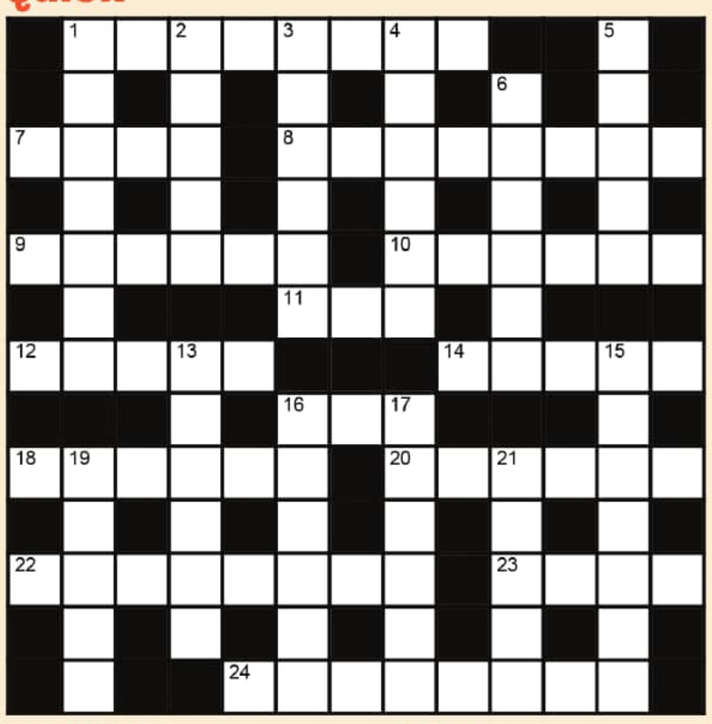
The numbers in the grey squares refer to the sums of the digits that you must fill into the empty spaces directly below or to the right of the grey square containing the number. For instance, in the given example, the 3 boxes horizontally next to 15 must contain 3 digits that add up to 15, whereas for 9, it is the 2 boxes placed vertically under it that must add up to 9. No zeros are used here, only the digits 1 through 9.



Note: A digit cannot appear more than once in any particular digit combination. For instance, in the example, we cannot have the combination of 4+7+4 for 15.



Quick



ACROSS

1 Strong cricketing shot (3,5)
7 Mexican coin (4)
8 Famous Italian violinist and composer (8)
9 Kilt material (6)
10 Turn down (6)
11 Snow runner (3)
12 Ten million, in our country? (5)
14 Nile dam site (5)
16 __ __ good boy : behave yourself (2,1)
18 Martial art (4,2)
20 Dwells on (6)
22 HCl, HBr or H-2-O-2 et al. ? (8)
23 Third person pronoun (4)
24 Trains stop here (8)

DOWN

1 Alfresco (4-3)
2 Facade or appearance? (5)
3 Matures-"sin rep" anagram (6)
4 Former Karnataka Governor who went on to become India's President (1,1,4)
5 Monetary penalties (5)
6 ___ at : shows contempt or disapproval (6)
13 System of government (6)
15 Archie ____ : comic strip hero from Riverdale? (7)
16 Revolver missile (6)
17 Wretched, contemptible (6)
19 German submarine (1-4)
21 Prefix for straight or right (5)

Quoteuncode

This puzzle is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that Q equals C, it will equal C throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Today's CLUE: Z EQUALS P

M JCHJC TK LANTAI DJ ZMIU TK ULC MIU TK VCMPCIJLDZ, TK SCUUDHS MVTHS ODUL ZCTZVC, TK SCUUDHS ULDHSJ PTHC.

Linemaro

Every time I see you, you take my breath away

Mindchow

Knowledge has to be improved, challenged and increased constantly, or it vanishes

Joke of the day

We've got stained glass windows in our house; it's those damned pigeons

Loop

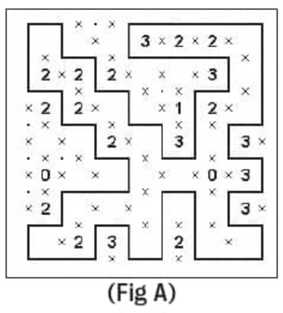
Rules

» Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single loop (Fig A). » Crossovers or branches are not allowed (As shown by dotted lines in Fig B). » Numbers in the puzzle indicate the number of lines that should surround it, while empty cells may be surrounded by any number of lines. » You can't draw lines around zeros. » Each puzzle has just one unique solution.

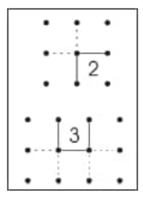
How to begin:

Example (Fig A) – Begin with the zero next to 3. Since no lines can be drawn around zero, mark crosses around it, as shown. Now there is a cross in one space around 3. So we know the three lines of 3 can only be drawn in the remaining three spaces. Next, these lines can only be extended in one direction each. Continue, using the same logic.

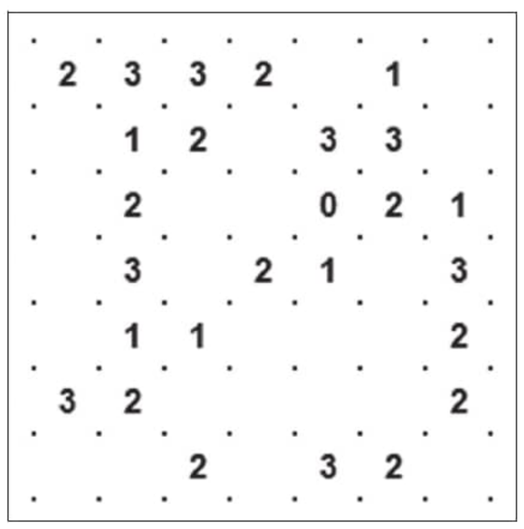
Hints: Keep eliminating possibilities by marking crosses in spaces between dots where a line isn't possible, i.e., if you have already completed required lines or where a line extension may create a branch or cause a dead-end (Fig B)



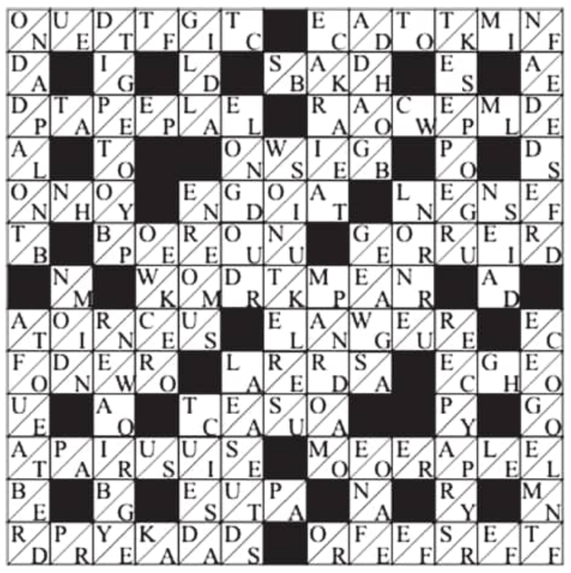
(Fig A)



(Fig B) Not Allowed



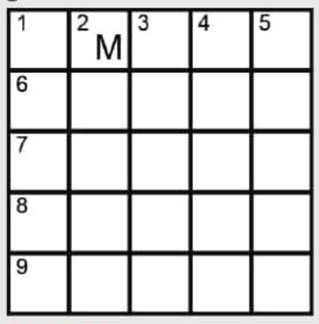
Strikeout



This crossword has no clues and the answer is there waiting for you. All you have to do is find it in each square. You have a choice of two letters, one of which you must strike out. If you choose correctly, you will be left with a grid that contains real words.

Fast five

How long do you think it will take you to unscramble the ten words shown below and fit them correctly into the grid in the order given one letter has already been entered to get you started? on your marks, get set...



ACROSS

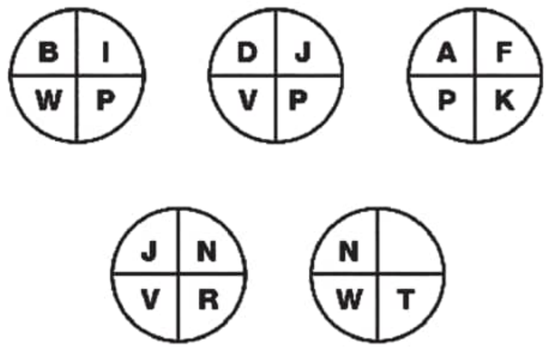
1 My pal; 6 Irate;
7 Inter; 8 A gall;
9 Sired

DOWN

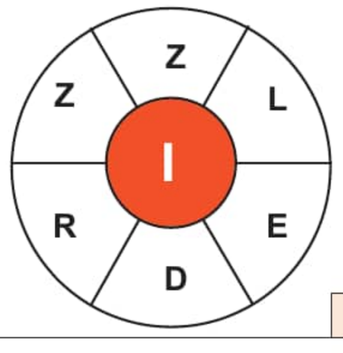
1 At art; 2 Ler me;
3 Grips; 4 Liana;
5 I'd lye

Mensapuzzle

Which character is missing from this puzzle?



Bull's eye



How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown? Every word must contain the central letter. There should be one seven-letter word. British English Dictionary is used as a reference.

05 Average; 06 Good; 08 Outstanding

SudokuChallenge

6						8		
	4		8			2		7
1				7			3	
			2	9			4	
7			5	3	1			6
	5			6	8			
	1			2				8
3		9			5		7	
		7						4

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from one to nine must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Gofigure

Place the four numbers in the first, third, fifth, and seventh boxes and whatever operators you care to use in the second, fourth, and sixth boxes in the correct order to get the answer. Use the numbers only once.

Easy

= 14

2 3 6 7

Medium

= 38

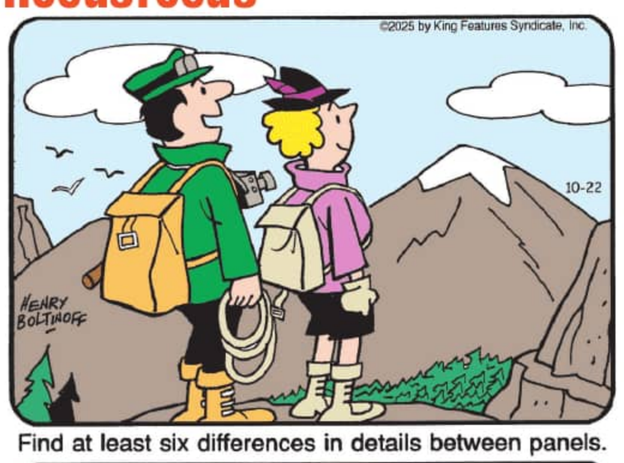
1 2 9 9

Hard

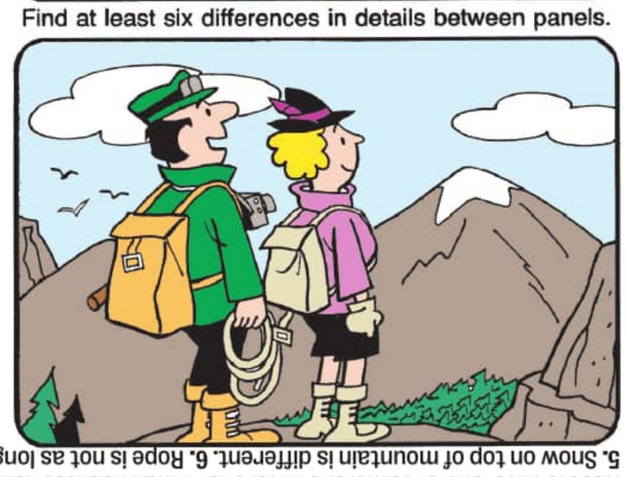
= 30

2 3 4 8

Hocusfocus



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



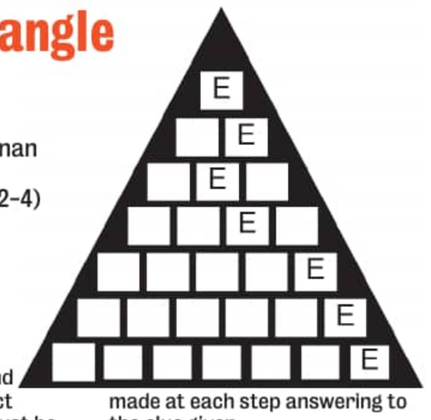
Differences: 1. Buckle on bottom of backpack is smaller. 2. Nose is different. 3. Camera is different. 4. Man has less hair. 5. Snow on top of mountain is different. 6. Rope is not as long.

Riddler

A man can make perfect counterfeit bills. They look exactly like real ones, they're made of exactly the same materials, made the same way, everything. So perfect, one could pretty much call them real bills. One day he successfully makes a perfect copy of another bill. However, he gets caught when he tries to use the copy. How is this possible?

Alpha triangle

1 Second vowel
2 Delaware, abbr.
3 Guided
4 Fight for D'Artagnan
5 Sidestep
6 Top-of-the-line (2-4)
7 Keep out

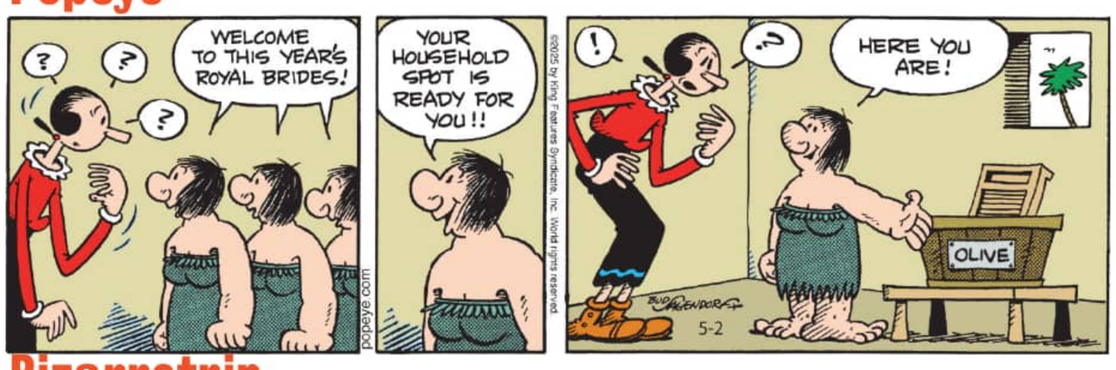


Beginning at the top move towards the bottom seven-letter word by adding a letter at each step and rearranging. A correct and different word must be made at each step answering to the clue given.

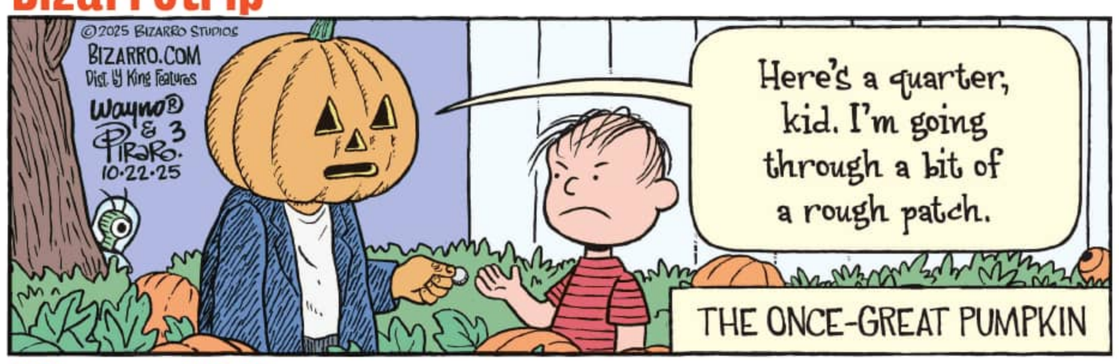
DIFFICULT TO SOLVE? FIND THESE SOLUTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE

COMICS

Popeye



Bizarrotrip



Diamond Lil

Hart of the city

Crankshaft

Mutts

WRITTEN IN THE STARS

DR SUNDEEP KOCHAR

If it's your birthday today

A vibrant year of personal reinvention and dynamic self-expression begins now. Do not hesitate to initiate bold new projects and put yourself first. Your energy is magnetic and draws in exciting opportunities and people. Embrace your individuality and act fearlessly; this is your time for a powerful, exhilarating personal launch.

Aries Mar 21–Apr 20

Loved ones appreciate your presence today. Taking time to reconnect brings warmth and understanding. Gentle conversations deepen bonds. Emotional balance grows as you prioritise meaningful relationships and shared moments.

Taurus Apr 21–May 20

Optimism uplifts your spirit. You inspire others with hopeful thinking. Creative problem solving feels natural. Your positivity spreads easily, motivating everyone around you while strengthening your own inner resilience and clarity.

Gemini May 21–Jun 21

Solitude brings clarity today. Reflecting gently helps you understand your inner world. Personal insight expands as you explore deeper thoughts. This peaceful pause strengthens emotional balance and meaningful self-awareness.

Cancer Jun 22–July 23

Contentment surrounds you. Acceptance of change brings peace. Life aligns smoothly with your wishes. Gratitude enhances your joy. Embrace this pleasant flow as opportunities gently support your emotional and personal growth.

Leo Jul 24 – Aug 23

A refreshing shift brightens your outlook. Unexpected positivity enhances confidence. Encouraging moments inspire hope. Your energy radiates warmth and creates uplifting experiences for yourself and others throughout the day.

Virgo Aug 24–Sep 23

Family togetherness strengthens joy. Shared moments deepen love. Supportive interactions uplift your spirit. Relationships feel harmonious. Emotional closeness brings comfort and reminds you of what matters most.

Libra Sep 24–Oct 22

Confidence rises as supportive energy surrounds you. Personal strength guides decisions. Ambition grows gently. Positive momentum builds while responsibilities receive calm, thoughtful attention. Emotional balance encourages progress.

Scorpio Oct 23–Nov 22

Peace returns as stress fades. Relaxed energy enhances connection with others. Pleasant interactions brighten your mood. Enjoy this soft flow of happiness and the ease it brings to your day.

Sagittarius Nov 23–Dec 22

New experiences restore your excitement. Social plans uplift your spirit. Gentle exploration inspires creativity. Let yourself unwind and enjoy refreshing environments. Emotional renewal enhances clarity and personal inspiration.

Capricorn Dec 23–Jan 20

Emotional waves encourage rest today. Quiet moments bring comfort. Solitude supports healing. Simple pleasures calm your mind. Staying home nurtures peace and helps you regain steady focus for future goals.

Aquarius Jan 21–Feb 19

Joyful energy fills your day. Social activities feel exciting. New encounters inspire curiosity. You step out confidently, embracing uplifting experiences that broaden your perspective and brighten your mood.

Pisces Feb 20–Mar 20

Thoughtful planning brings success. Calm steps ensure smooth progress. Avoid impulse and trust your intuition. Emotional awareness guides wise decisions and supports productive outcomes throughout the day.

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SOLUTIONS

SOLVE IN 1M

$= \sqrt[16]{(4^{\wedge}16)}$
$= 4^{\wedge}(16/16)$
$= 4^{\wedge}1 = 4$

BULL'S EYE

dell, dire, DRIZZLE, idle, idler, lled, ride, rile

FAST FIVE

A	M	P	L	Y
T	E	R	A	I
T	R	I	N	E
A	L	G	A	L
R	E	S	I	D

RIDDLER

As a counterfeiter, he had lots of counterfeit bills around and he accidentally used one of them as his original. So he made a perfect copy of a counterfeit bill.

STRIKE OUT

O	U	T	F	I	I	T	C	A	T	K	I	N	G	
D	I	L	L	I	T	■	B	A	H	■	E	■	E	
D	A	P	P	L	E	■	R	A	C	E	M	E	D	
L	T	■	N	W	E	B	■	P	■	■	■	■	D	
O	H	O	■	E	D	I	T	■	L	E	S	E	■	
T	■	P	E	R	O	N	■	G	O	R	E	D	■	
N	■	W	O	R	K	M	A	N	■	A	■	■	■	
T	O	N	E	S	■	L	A	G	E	R	■	C	■	
O	D	E	R	■	L	E	D	A	■	E	G	O	■	
U	■	A	■	C	A	S	A	■	P	■	G	■	■	
T	A	R	S	U	S	■	M	O	R	A	L	E	■	
E	■	B	■	E	T	A	■	A	■	Y	■	N	■	
D	R	Y	A	D	S	■	O	F	F	S	E	T	■	

QUICK

■	■	■	■	■	S	T	A	T	I	O	N	S	■	
■	■	■	■	■	■	E	■	■	■	■	■	W	■	
■	■	■	■	C	■	E	■	■	■	H	■	H	E	
■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	E	■	
■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	
■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	
■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	
■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	
■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	
■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	
■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	
■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	
■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	
■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	

MENSA PUZZLE

Q. In each circle the letters move clockwise in increments of 7 for the top left circle through to 3 for the bottom right circle.

QUOTE UNCODE

A sense of humour is part of the art of leadership, of getting along with people, of getting things done.

SUDOKU

6	7	2	3	5	4	8	1	9
5	4	3	8	1	9	2	6	7
1	9	8	6	7	2	4	3	5
8	3	6	2	9	7	5	4	1
7	2	4	5	3	1	9	8	6
9	5	1	4	6	8	7	2	3
4	1	5	7	2	6	3	9	8
3	8	9	1	4	5	6	7	2
2	6	7	9	8	3	1	5	4

ALPHA TRIANGLE

E, DE, Led, Duel, Elude, De-luxe, Exclude.

LOOP

Easy
7 + 6 + 3 − 2 = 14
Medium
9 + 9 + 1 × 2 = 38
Hard
3 × 8 + 2 + 4 = 30

KAKURO

■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■

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 # Private matter
"I was very private": Sydney Sweeney opens up on relationship with ex-fiance Jonathan Davino

Let's call it love too

Your prayers have been answered! Your beloved 'Sita Ramam' pair Dulquer Salmaan and Mrunal Thakur are reuniting! Yes, that's right. Well, they may not necessarily be returning as Lieutenant Ram and Sita Mahalakshmi, but there's still love! The 'Sitar Ramam' actors are uniting for an upcoming song titled 'Bheegi Bheegi'!

On Thursday, January 29, Mrunal Thakur dropped a promo of the song. Featuring Dulquer Salmaan and Mrunal Thakur, 'Bheegi Bheegi' is surely a love track. Perhaps Sita and Ram's tragic love story would finally get closure? One that would mend our broken hearts!

AR Rahman is composing the music of 'Bheegi Bheegi', and vocals are by A.R. Ameen and Jasleen Royal. "Call it fate, call it a coincidence… we call it love," Mrunal Thakur captioned. The promo opens with the lyrics 'Bheegi Bheegi Raaton Mei'.

Is it a rendition of the iconic song from Rajesh Khanna and Zeenat Aman's 1974 film 'Ajanabee', sung by Kishore Kumar, and Lata Mangeshkar? Well, we don't really know. But, 'Sita Ramam' pair's song is surely going to be on your playlist this Valentine's month!

—ETimes

For entertainment purposes only

Amruta Anjan
3.0 RATING ★★★☆☆
- **DIRECTOR** Jothirao Mohit
- **ACTORS** Sudhakar Gowda, Payal Chengappa, Gowrav Shetty, Shree Bhavya, Karthik Ruvary, Naveen
- **Duration** 153 minutes
- **Certification** U/A

After Sodabuddi, Jothirao Mohit comes out with a story that has an underlying message. Mohit has included some courageous scenes set in a school and a college, especially a scene where the protagonist and his friends blackmail their teachers. These scenes are a hint at what awaits students if they do not focus on academics. The movie has plenty of scenes where key characters just kill time smoking and drinking. The movie is purely for entertainment and must come with a disclaimer that it should not be emulated in real life. One scene where a student collects extra money from other students and lies to the headmaster about his teacher has no purpose except maybe to make the audiences laugh.

The movie begins with an elderly person advising his relative (Naveen D Padil) not to commit a mistake that he had committed in the past. The next scene is when Boss (Naveen) is having an argument with an event manager and beating him black and blue after 8 pm since he considers silence as allergy and sound as energy. Boss, after receiving complaints from teachers, decides to send his son Jagan Roy Mohan aka JRM to Bengaluru for higher studies. Instead of focusing on education, JRM indulges in boozing and getting into a relationship with a girl. He continues blackmailing lecturers at the college. You have to watch the movie to see what happens to JRM and whether or not he knows the value of money and hard work.

The specialty of the movie is that all the actors have done a good job. Sudhakar Gowda looks energetic. Payal Chengappa, as a possessive lover, has acted well. Gaurav Shetty, as Appaji, Karthik, as an incorrigible drunkard, and Chetan Durga, as Potato Pachi, have provided good support.

It is worth a watch if you are looking for just entertainment.

—Y Maheswara Reddy

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